

REMARKS

Claims 5-14, 16-20 and 22-26 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 5-14, 16-20 and 22-26 are amended. The amendments introduce no new matter. Claims 1-4, 15 and 21 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited in those claims. Reconsideration of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representative by Examiner Hirl at the interview held May 1, 2007, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

The Office Action makes final the July 18, 2006 Restriction Requirement. Non-elected claims 1-4, 15 and 21 are canceled.

The Office Action objects to the drawings as containing Japanese characters. Applicants have reviewed the drawings on file on the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office website and understand that the formal drawings submitted on April 30, 2004 have been accepted and entered. The formal drawings contain no Japanese characters. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

The Office Action states that claims 1, 2, 6-14, 19, 25 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicants interpret the reference to claims 1 and 2 to be directed to claim 5, as claims 1 and 2 are provisionally withdrawn from consideration in the Office Action. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Regarding claims 6-14, the Office Action asserts that it is unclear how "an analysis unit" can perform any functions such as "analyzing" in claim 5, "calculating" in claim 6 and "identifying" in claims 7-14. The amendments to claims 5-8 and 10-14 obviate the rejection.

Regarding claims 5, 19 and 25, the Office Action asserts that these claims omit a step of a result that follows the analyzing of a propagation state, so it can display the result of analyzing the propagation step, not the analyzed propagation step itself. Claims 5, 19 and 25 are amended to clarify that the input information is analyzed to determine a propagation state.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of, what Applicants understand to be, claims 5-14, 19, 25 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, are respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 5-9, 16-20 and 22-26 under 35 U.S.C. §101 as allegedly failing to recite a tangible result. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that claims 5, 19 and 25 display the analyzed propagation state, not an action that comes out as a result of analyzing the propagation state. The amendments to claims 5, 19 and 25 obviate this rejection.

Regarding claims 6-9, 16-18, 20, 22-24 and 26, the Office Action asserts that the claims fail to recite a tangible and concrete result because they all end in a mathematical algorithm step, such as calculating, that leads to no practical application that is concrete and tangible.

The rejection of at least claim 6 is improper as that claim depends on claim 5, which specifically recites an output unit for displaying and outputting the analyzed propagation state of the knowledge. The amendments to claims 7-9, 16-18, 20, 22-24 and 26, to include at least a displaying and/or outputting of calculated values, obviate the remaining rejections.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 5-9, 16-20 and 22-26 under 35 U.S.C. §101 are respectfully requested.

The claim amendments were discussed during the May 1 personal interview with Examiner Hirl. Based on the Examiner's initial review, he indicated that the proposed claim

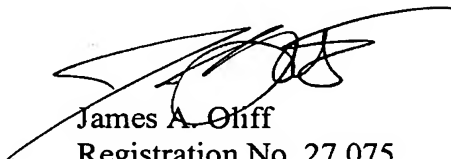
amendments appear to overcome the various formal rejections of the Office Action.

Applicants appreciate this indication by the Examiner.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 5-14, 16-20 and 22-26 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

James E. Golladay, II
Registration No. 58,182

JAO:JEG/jgg

Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: May 9, 2007

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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